

# THE WOMEN'S INSTITUTE ACT

## CHAPTER 371

### An Act respecting Women's Institutes

1. This Act may be cited as "*The Women's Institute Act*". Short title  
[R.S.A. 1942, c. 262, s. 1]

#### Interpretation

2. In this Act,
- (a) "council" means the council of the Alberta Women's Institutes; Interpre-  
tation  
"council"
  - (b) "institute" means any women's institute incorporated under this Act, or to which this Act applies, except the Alberta Women's Institutes; "institute"
  - (c) "provincial president" means the president of the Alberta Women's Institutes and includes the vice-president thereof. "provincial  
president"  
[R.S.A. 1942, c. 262, s. 2]

#### Objects

3. The objects of the institutes shall be the improvement of social conditions in rural and other communities by means of Objects

- (a) the study of
  - (i) home economics, including home nursing, household science, sanitation, food values, sick-room cookery, house furnishing, sewing and other matters, and
  - (ii) child welfare, prevention of disease, local neighbourhood needs, industrial and social conditions,
- (b) the establishment of institutes as social and educational community centres and the provision of a welcome to new settlers in the community,
- (c) the encouragement of agriculture and an improvement of agricultural conditions, and
- (d) the holding, establishment and maintenance of demonstrations, lectures, short course schools, travelling and other libraries, exhibitions, competitions, meetings, conventions and such other utilities and attractions as may from time to time be declared useful for the promotion of the foregoing or any of them. [R.S.A. 1942, c. 262, s. 3]

**The Alberta Women's Institutes**

Existing  
institutes

4. All existing institutes, together with all institutes which may hereafter be incorporated, are hereby declared to be associated together as a corporation

- (a) with perpetual succession and a common seal,
- (b) with the title of "The Alberta Women's Institutes",
- (c) with the objects of promoting, supervising and co-ordinating the activities of women's institutes, and
- (d) with power to do all things necessary and incidental to carrying out such objects, either alone or in conjunction with any other person, association or body.

[R.S.A. 1942, c. 262, s. 4]

Constitution  
and by-laws

5. The constitution and by-laws of the Alberta Women's Institutes, as the same were set out in the report of the annual convention of Alberta Women's Institutes held in 1928, shall continue in full force and effect, so far as the same are not inconsistent with this Act, as the constitution and by-laws of the Alberta Women's Institutes incorporated by this Act.

[R.S.A. 1942, c. 262, s. 5]

Council

6. There shall be a council which shall have the general management and control of the affairs of the Alberta Women's Institutes.

[R.S.A. 1942, c. 262, s. 6]

Number of  
directors

7. At any convention of institutes, the number of directors may from time to time be increased or diminished by means of an amendment to the constitution and by-laws and duly passed at any such convention.

[R.S.A. 1942, c. 262, s. 7]

Power to  
alter  
constitution

8. The constitution of the Alberta Women's Institutes may be modified, altered and amended in any way not inconsistent with this Act at any convention of institutes, by resolution passed in accordance with the constitution and by-laws for the time being in force.

[R.S.A. 1942, c. 262, s. 8]

Officers and  
servants

9. The council has power to engage such officers and servants as it from time to time deems proper, to prescribe their duties, fix their salaries, and to dispense with the services of any officer or servant.

[R.S.A. 1942, c. 262, s. 9]

**Local Institutes**

Incorpor-  
ation

10. (1) Eight or more married or single women who are over sixteen years of age, residents of the same vicinity, and not members of any other institute, may proceed to the formation and incorporation of an institute in the manner set out in this section.

(2) An application for incorporation in Form A in the Schedule containing the information thereby required shall be signed by the women desiring the formation of the institute.

(3) Each woman subscribing to the application shall pay the sum of twenty-five cents as or as part of her annual subscription to the proposed institute, and such moneys shall be paid to and held by one of the subscribers in trust for the institute.

(4) The application shall be delivered at the office of the council of the Alberta Women's Institutes, together with a certificate as to the due signing of the application and the payment of the requisite sums, and the council may in its discretion either approve or disapprove the application.

(5) Upon the provincial president approving the application, the provincial president shall issue a certificate in Form B in the Schedule, under the seal of the Alberta Women's Institutes, declaring the subscribers and all others who might thereafter become members to be incorporated under this Act, with a title of which the last words shall be "Women's Institute".

(6) Thereafter such institute is a corporation under its declared title with the objects and powers aforesaid, together with the power of holding such real and personal property as is necessary for its objects.

(7) The institute is capable of receiving and holding any real or personal property by grant, gift, legacy or devise and of investing the same or the proceeds thereof, and of using the same or any part thereof, subject to the provisions of this Act, in the furtherance of the objects of the institute.

[R.S.A. 1942, c. 262, s. 10]

11. An institute may, with the consent of the provincial president, change its name by filing with the council a certified copy of a resolution made for that purpose and passed at a general or special meeting by a majority of the members present and voting thereon.

Change of  
name

[R.S.A. 1942, c. 262, s. 11]

12. An institute shall adopt a corporate seal.

Corporate  
seal

[R.S.A. 1942, c. 262, s. 12]

### Organization

13. (1) Within sixty days after incorporation, a meeting of the members of the institute shall be held at the call of one of the subscribers who shall be designated by the provincial president.

Organization  
meeting

(2) Such meeting shall be the organization and first annual meeting of the institute.



- (3) The chairman and secretary of the meeting
  - (a) shall prepare and sign a statement setting out the date of the meeting, and the names and addresses of the officers and members of the committees appointed thereat, and
  - (b) shall within two weeks after the date of the meeting transmit the statement to the office of the council.

[R.S.A. 1942, c. 262, s. 13]

### Membership

#### Membership

**14.** (1) The qualification for membership in an institute shall be as stated in section 10, and any woman having such qualification may become a member of an institute on application to the secretary and on payment to the treasurer of the membership fee, which shall not be less than twenty-five cents.

(2) At the time of such application and payment of fee the applicant for membership shall give the secretary the post office address to which all notices shall be sent.

[R.S.A. 1942, c. 262, s. 14]

### Officers

#### Officers

**15.** (1) The officers of an institute shall be a president, a vice-president, a secretary and a treasurer or a secretary-treasurer, who are *ex officio* directors, and at least three directors.

(2) There shall be in addition to the three directors referred to in subsection (1) one director for every ten members in excess of thirty.

[R.S.A. 1942, c. 262, s. 15]

#### Qualification of voters, etc.

**16.** The persons qualified to vote for or to be elected as officers shall be only those members regularly enrolled, who have paid their membership fee for the ensuing year.

[R.S.A. 1942, c. 262, s. 16]

#### Election by ballot

**17.** (1) All officers shall be elected by ballot after previous verbal nomination.

(2) A majority of the ballots cast is necessary to elect.

[R.S.A. 1942, c. 262, s. 17]

#### Term of office

**18.** Officers shall hold office until their successors are elected.

[R.S.A. 1942, c. 262, s. 18]

#### Vacancies

**19.** In the event of an officer of an institute dying or resigning office or otherwise vacating the office during the period for which she was elected, the directors shall appoint an eligible person to fill the office for the unexpired term.

[R.S.A. 1942, c. 262, s. 19]

### Committees

**20.** (1) An institute may appoint such special committees as it from time to time requires. Special committees

(2) The president is *ex officio* a member of all committees. [R.S.A. 1942, c. 262, s. 20]

### Meetings

**21.** An institute shall hold its annual meeting, other than the organization meeting, in the month of December in each year, at such time and place as the directors may appoint. Annual general meeting  
[R.S.A. 1942, c. 262, s. 21]

**22.** (1) At least two weeks' notice shall be given of any annual general meeting of an institute, and the notice shall be in writing and either posted by mail to the furnished address of each member or delivered personally at such address. Notice of annual general meetings

(2) Notice of a special meeting may be given in any manner and at any time.

(3) Notwithstanding subsection (2) no business affecting the funds or property of the institute shall be transacted at any special meeting summoned otherwise than in the manner set out in subsection (1) unless the meeting is attended by at least forty per cent of the enrolled members of the institute. [R.S.A. 1942, c. 262, s. 22]

**23.** (1) Special general meetings may be called by the president or vice-president. Special general meetings

(2) No business of which notice has not been previously given to all enrolled members shall be transacted at any such meeting.

(3) Twenty per cent of the enrolled members constitute a quorum for all general meetings.  
[R.S.A. 1942, c. 262, s. 23]

**24.** In case of failure to hold the annual meetings as provided in section 21, the provincial president may appoint a time for holding the same, and the secretary shall notify the members in the manner aforesaid. Failure to hold annual meeting

[R.S.A. 1942, c. 262, s. 24]

**25.** The presiding officer at meetings of an institute shall be the president, or in her absence the vice-president, or in the absence of president and vice-president, a chairman who shall be appointed at the meeting. Presiding officer

[R.S.A. 1942, c. 262, s. 25]

Order of  
business

**26.** The following shall be the order of business at annual meetings:

- (a) reading and disposing of minutes of preceding annual and intervening special general meetings;
- (b) reports of officers;
- (c) reports of committees;
- (d) unfinished business;
- (e) election of officers;
- (f) new business;
- (g) appointment of committees;
- (h) appointment of delegates to annual conventions;
- (i) addresses and discussion;
- (j) adjournment. [R.S.A. 1942, c. 262, s. 26]

Directors'  
meeting

**27.** Directors' meetings shall be held after a notice that has been mailed, telephoned or delivered orally.

[R.S.A. 1942, c. 262, s. 27]

Power of  
directors

**28.** (1) The directors, subject to this Act and to the by-laws and regulations of their institute, have full power to act for and on behalf of the institute, and all funds of the society shall be administered under their directions.

(2) The presiding officer at directors' meetings shall be as is set forth in section 25. [R.S.A. 1942, c. 262, s. 28]

### Quorum

Quorum

**29.** Three directors constitute a quorum at a meeting of the executive of the institute.

[R.S.A. 1942, c. 262, s. 29]

Annual  
audit

**30.** The directors of every institute shall cause the books and accounts of the treasurer or secretary-treasurer to be audited annually by one or more auditors who shall be appointed by the directors, and no such account shall be submitted to any annual meeting unless it has been audited and is accompanied by a certificate signed by the auditor or auditors. [R.S.A. 1942, c. 262, s. 30]

List of  
officers and  
copy of  
treasurer's  
account

**31.** Immediately after the holding of the annual meeting of an institute, the chairman and secretary of that meeting shall transmit to the council a list certified by them, and containing the names and addresses of all officers of the institute elected thereat and a copy of the treasurer's account. [R.S.A. 1942, c. 262, s. 31]

### By-Laws

By-laws

**32.** (1) An institute at an annual or special general meeting called for that purpose may make, alter or repeal by-laws or regulations for its general management which



shall not be inconsistent with the provisions of this Act, or of the provincial by-laws.

(2) Such by-laws or regulations have no force or effect until approved of by the council. [R.S.A. 1942, c. 262, s. 32]

### Property and Funds

#### 33. The directors

Property  
and funds

- (a) shall not sell, mortgage or dispose of any real property of the institute, or lease the same, in such a way as to interfere with its use for the business and meetings of the institute, or
- (b) shall not make any grant out of any funds of the institute,

unless authorized to do so by an annual meeting, or a special general meeting. [R.S.A. 1942, c. 262, s. 33]

### Existing Institutes

34. Women's institutes incorporated under any other Act, and in existence, are continued and are subject to the provisions of this Act, and henceforth have the same powers and privileges as if the same had been incorporated under this Act. [R.S.A. 1942, c. 262, s. 34]

Existing  
institutes

35. (1) Any eight or more girls of not less than twelve years of age may under this Act form girls' clubs, to be known as "Women's Institute Girls' Clubs", with such social, literary, educational or recreational objects, and such constitution and by-laws, as may be approved by the council.

"Women's  
Institute  
Girls' Clubs"

(2) The council may make regulations for the formation, government and operation of girls' clubs not inconsistent with this Act.

(3) Every such club becomes a corporation upon the issuance of a certificate of incorporation, under the seal of the Alberta Women's Institutes, in Form C in the Schedule.

(4) Any girl over the age of six years may be admitted as a member of a Women's Institute Girls' Club.

[R.S.A. 1942, c. 262, s. 35]

### Independence of Institutes

36. (1) Institutes shall be non-partisan and non-sectarian and shall not be operated in the interest of any party, sect, or society, but only for the general good and welfare.

Independence of  
institutes

(2) No addresses or discussions in the interest of any society or organization formed for any special purpose shall be permitted at any meeting of any institute or at any institute convention, except by the unanimous consent of the meeting. [R.S.A. 1942, c. 262, s. 36]

## SCHEDULE

FORM A  
(Section 10)

To the President, Alberta Women's Institutes,

We, the undersigned, hereby apply to be formed into a Women's Institute under the provisions of *The Women's Institute Act*.

The proposed name of the Institute is "The.....  
Women's Institute".

The proposed chief office of the Institute is at.....  
Alberta.

And each of the undersigned declares:

1. That she is over sixteen years of age.
2. That she is a resident of Alberta, and of the community to be served by the Institute.
3. That she is not a member of any other Institute formed under this Act.
4. That she has subscribed at least twenty-five cents as, or as part of, her first annual subscription to the funds of the proposed Institute.

Dated at.....this.....day of....., 19....

Name	Married or Single	P. O. Address
.....	.....	.....
.....	.....	.....
.....	.....	.....
.....	.....	.....
.....	.....	.....
.....	.....	.....
.....	.....	.....

## CERTIFICATE VERIFYING APPLICATION

CANADA }  
PROVINCE OF ALBERTA }

I, ....., of.....  
in the Province of Alberta, hereby certify:

1. That I am one of the subscribers to the foregoing (or annexed) application.
2. That I verily believe that the statements made in the said application by each of the applicants are true.
3. That each of the applicants has subscribed at least twenty-five cents as, or as part of, her first annual subscription to the funds of the proposed Institute.

[R.S.A. 1942, c. 262, Schedule, Form A]



## FORM B

(Section 10)

## CERTIFICATE OF INCORPORATION

This is to certify that, application having been duly made for the formation of a Women's Institute with chief office at....., and the said Institute having been declared by me to be organized, "The..... Women's Institute" is a body corporate with the objects and powers attaching to such by virtue of *The Women's Institute Act*.

.....  
*President, Alberta Women's Institutes.*

(SEAL)

[R.S.A. 1942, c. 262, Schedule, Form B]

## FORM C

(Section 35)

CERTIFICATE OF INCORPORATION OF WOMEN'S  
INSTITUTE GIRLS' CLUB

This is to certify that the..... Women's Institute Girls' Club has been by me approved, and is declared to be organized as a body corporate with the objects and powers attaching to such by virtue of *The Women's Institute Act*.

Dated this..... day of....., A.D. 19.....

.....  
*President, Alberta Women's Institutes.*

(SEAL)

[R.S.A. 1942, c. 262, Schedule, Form C]